

## Chris O'Brien

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**From:** Jeremy Ferris <jferris237@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 21, 2020 10:32 PM  
**To:** Chris O'Brien  
**Cc:** Rep. Abney, Marvin L.; marvinla@aol.com; Rep. Slater, Scott; slateroc@aol.com; Rep. Marszalkowski, Alex; ALEXDISTRICT52@gmail.com; Rep. Amore, Gregg; GREGGAMORE@verizon.net; Rep. Barros, Jean P.; jeanphilippebarros@yahoo.com; Rep. Diaz, Grace; Rep\_Diaz; Rep. Edwards, John G.; JOHN.EDWARDS.V@gmail.com; Rep. McLaughlin, James; jimmclaughlin1943@gmail.com; Rep. Mendez, Mario F.; mfmendez621@gmail.com; Rep. Morin, Michael A.; Rep. O'Brien, William W.; WILLIAMOBRIEN2012@gmail.com; Rep. Price, Justin; Rep\_Price; Rep. Quattrocchi, Robert J.; BOBBYQUATRO@gmail.com; Rep. Tobon, Carlos E.; carlosetobon@gmail.com; Rep. Vella-Wilkinson, Camille; VELLAWILKINSON@gmail.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for 7/22 House Committee on Finance - Close the ACI High Security Center

Dear House Finance Committee Representatives,

My name is Jeremy Ferris and I am a constituent of Rhode Island. I live at 12 Tell Street in Providence.

I'm writing today to demand you take action to close the ACI High Security Center. While the Governor's current budget proposes closing two modules within High Security, this budget plan needs to go further and close the High Security Center outright.

I believe that supermax facilities like the ACI High Security Center are deeply inhumane. I cannot claim any personal experience in living through incarceration and the effects of solitary confinement, but understand from countless stories, studies, and reports how deeply unethical it is. As a public library employee, I work to support the needs of people often without many resources, and often the same groups of people who are incarcerated at disproportionate rates. The funds "necessary" to operate the ACI High Security Center would be an unimaginable benefit to organizations like public libraries that are actually attempting to support poor communities and communities of color and end senseless incarceration.

The ACI High Security Center was built to house individuals in long-term solitary confinement, which is in violation of the UN's Mandela Rules. RIDOC Director Coyne-Fague noted herself in her 2019 testimony to this Committee that "keeping people in cells 23 hours a day is not really the way to go." She also spoke on the dangerous conditions of the outdated building, further proof that the entire facility needs to close. The High Security Center is RIDOC's most expensive facility to run at a yearly cost of almost \$200,000 per prisoner. Rhode Island would save millions of dollars a year by permanently closing High Security and could re-allocate these funds to desperately needed community services.

I hope that the House Finance Committee will take bold action in fully closing the ACI High Security Center.

Thank you,  
Jeremy Ferris